

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA
ASHEVILLE DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)	CASE NO. 1:18-CR-88
)	
v.)	
)	
AMANDA LOUISE STONE)	

CHARACTER LETTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY COURT

NOW COMES the Defendant, AMANDA LOUISE STONE, by and through her undersigned counsel of record, Jack W. Stewart, who respectfully submits the attached letters of recommendation for consideration by this Court at the Sentencing Hearing presently scheduled for Wednesday, the 28th day of August, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. in Asheville, North Carolina.

This the 23rd day of August, 2019.

By: s/ J. Stewart
Jack W. Stewart
State Bar No: 10053
Attorney for the Defendant
61 N. Market Street
Asheville, North Carolina 28801
(828) 253-5673
jack@jackstewartlaw.com

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

This is to certify that the undersigned has this date served the foregoing pleading upon all other parties via ECF transmission as follows:

Richard Edwards at richard.edwards2@usdoj.gov
Attorney for the United States

Barbara Carrigan at Barbara_Carrigan@ncwp.uscourts.gov
Senior U.S. Probation Officer

This the 23rd day of August, 2019.

By: s/ J. Stewart
Jack W. Stewart
Attorney for the Defendant

**Rebecca B. Knight
P. O. Box 701
Asheville, NC 28802**

June 7, 2019

Presiding Judge
U.S. District Court
Western District of North Carolina
Asheville Division 28801

RE: United States of America v. Amanda Louise Stone
1:18-CR-88 - Federal Investigation/Indictment/Fraud

Dear Presiding Judge:

I am respectfully submitting this letter on behalf of Amanda Louise Stone for your consideration in the sentencing hearing pursuant to Ms. Stone's guilty plea in the above referenced matter.

I have had a professional relationship and personal friendship with Ms. Stone for approximately thirty-five years. I met her when I was an Assistant County Attorney for Buncombe County and she was a social worker with the Buncombe County Department of Social Services assigned to child abuse, neglect and dependency cases. We worked together for several years on countless cases in Juvenile and Criminal Courts. Ms. Stone was an exceptional social worker who worked tirelessly to protect the most vulnerable children in our community, to reunite the children with family whenever possible and to secure permanent placements in adoptive homes when reunification was not possible. She was always prepared, professional and went above and beyond all expectations in every case. I had the same experience with Ms. Stone when I served as an Assistant District Attorney for the 28th Judicial District from 1988-1990 and as a District Court Judge in the 28th Judicial District from 1990 – 2012. I never had any reason to question her honesty or integrity. Ms. Stone never hesitated to accept responsibility for her decisions or the decisions of those who were under her supervision.

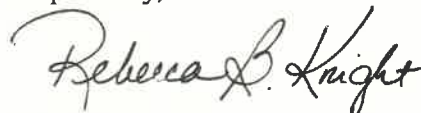
While I acknowledge a personal friendship with Ms. Stone, I would like to place that into context for the court. Prior to 1991, we would visit regularly in the courthouse waiting for our cases to be heard and during that time we discussed a wide variety of topics, including our families, our goals and interests. Since I have known Ms. Stone, I would estimate we have had dinner together maybe ten times and as far as I can recall there was always with one or more other professional women colleagues who were included in the dinner. I think the last such dinner was maybe fifteen years ago. We have attended countless work-related meetings involving court, social services or community issues. I visited her home once years ago with two other social workers when she was recovering from a surgery and I recall meeting her mother on that occasion. About fifteen years ago she and I visited another friend who was recovering from surgery. I knew her father, Dick Stone, a beloved Black Mountain attorney when I was practicing law in Black Mountain from 1982-1984. Our friendship was based on our work, common interests and mutual respect and our contacts and communication were primarily work related.

My last involvement with Ms. Stone was after my judicial retirement in July 2012. I was an independent contractor for a couple of years with Buncombe County working on a variety of court related projects reporting to a Program Manager who was under Ms. Stone's supervision. Ms. Stone was an Assistant County Manager and I was able to observe her leadership in the county, community and state. Since I had not worked closely with her for years, I was very excited about the opportunity to professionally collaborate with her and her team. I cannot speak highly enough about her leadership, her passion and her commitment to her work. A community-wide, multi-partner commitment to address domestic violence, sexual assaults and child abuse was underway and Ms. Stone led that initiative. Through her grit and determination, the Family Justice Center was developed and operational in half the time it typically to open a Family Justice Center in the United States. She also led a multidisciplinary partnership with law enforcement, mental health, courts, social services, schools and other agencies to create a Community Safety and Security Team that facilitates timely intervention and strategic planning for individuals who are a danger to the community. Personally, I think this work is groundbreaking and should be the model for the country to address mass shootings and other traumas. These are just two of countless examples of Ms. Stone's leadership in our community. I had peripheral observation of the enormity of her duties and the number of projects she managed or supervised and I don't know how she did it. It was not unusual to get an email from her in the middle of the night on a work-related matter. Truthfully, in my thirty-seven years as a lawyer, judge, mediator and community facilitator in Buncombe County, I can't think of any state or county employee that I have ever known who worked harder, accomplished more or was more respected than Mandy Stone.

None of what I have described is consistent with the facts that are before your Honor. When this scandal first broke, I "knew" there was no way that Ms. Stone was involved. She always took the high road, always had respect for the law and knew her public duty. Sadly, for whatever reason and under whatever circumstance, something shifted. As a trial judge, I was always deeply troubled when I could not reconcile the actions of someone before me that were so inconsistent with the person's character and history. It seemed the punishment from the court would never touch the self-inflicted pain and suffering the person created for themselves. I don't think I will ever know the underlying facts and circumstances that led Mandy to take the actions that resulted in the criminal charges and the guilty plea that is before you for sentencing. There is not one incident over the years of our professional and personal friendship that would ever have given me cause to suspect she would ever do anything of a criminal or unethical nature. When I received Mr. Stewart's letter offering me the opportunity to submit a letter to the court, there was deep regret and sadness but no hesitation on my part. I hate what she did but I know she is a good person who made a horrible decision that has hurt so many. Romans 3:23 applies to each of us, "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God".

Thank you for the opportunity to present this additional information to the court.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rebecca B. Knight". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Rebecca B. Knight

Carol Patton Gardner
1769 Harborage Drive SW
Unit D
Ocean Isle Beach, NC 28469

June 8, 2019

RE: Amanda Stone 1:18-CR-88

Dear Judge Conrad,

I have valued my friendship with Mandy Stone for over fifty years. Our fathers were childhood friends and our families shared holidays, vacations and important life events.

Mandy was always kind, thoughtful and a positive influence. Being the middle child among six siblings didn't stop her from setting the pace and leading by example. She automatically put others above self in every situation.

She willingly adopted her nieces' son and has raised him as if he were her own. She affords his and others participation in local sporting events both financially and through hands-on participation.

As a Buncombe County Schools special education teacher for thirty years I often called on her and her employees. She always responded quickly and professionally with expertise. She was well respected by our staff and those that she supervised.

She has lived across the street from a lady who has been an adopted aunt to many of us. Without being asked Mandy puts her garbage out, blows her driveway, leaves her paper at the door, and shovels snow. Her unsolicited kindness towards her neighbor is invaluable.

Mandy has a passion for the welfare of others. She has served family, friends, co-workers and children in the social services system with integrity and love.

Mandy has always been and continues to be an integral part of her community.

Sincerely,

Carol Patton Gardner



Special Investigation Services, Inc.

800 South Gay Street
Suite # 700
First Tennessee Bank Plaza
Knoxville, Tennessee 37929
865-235-0780

August 21, 2019

Honorable Judge Robert Conrad
United States District Court
Western District of North Carolina
100 Otis Street
Asheville, North Carolina 28801

Re: Sentencing of Amanda Stone, Case No. 1:18CR88

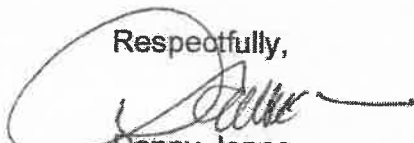
Dear Judge Conrad:

I am Danny Jones, a private investigator in Knoxville, Tennessee and owner of Special Investigation Services, Inc. Previously I was an investigator with the Buncombe County Sheriff's Department and later the Chief Investigator with the Buncombe County District Attorney's Office in Asheville cumulatively for 24 years.

During those years as an Investigator I was often assigned to child abuse cases that were reported to the Buncombe County Department of Social Services, Child Protective Services. I primarily worked with Amanda Stone (known as Mandy) who was a social worker in that unit. The job was tough. There is NO amount of training or education that can prepare one for that career. Mandy witnessed things that no one should ever have to see, murdered and sexually abused children, children who were broken and beaten, drug addicted newborns but Mandy always kept it professional and thoughtful. Mandy was available 24/7 to help regardless of the need and She carried a case load that was completely out of control and impossible for one person, she performed a service for the people of Buncombe County that cannot be repaid. Child Protective Services was a thankless and often unpopular job that consumes your life but the families and lives that she not only helped but saved are countless.

I pray the court will find leniency for Mandy. She has paid a price already in the service to her community and accomplished the undoable all while maintaining a kind, sweet spirit.

Respectfully,



Danny Jones

May 29, 2019

The Honorable Judge Robert Conrad
District Court of Western North Carolina
Asheville, NC 28801

Re: Mandy Stone

Dear Judge Conrad:

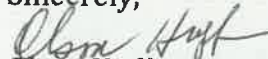
I cannot speak to the current issues involving Mandy Stone and the legal implications of those issues. However, I have known and worked with Mandy for many years, dating back to the 1980's, and wish to make comments about my professional interactions with her.

Mandy was a dedicated worker for children, tireless in her efforts to protect them against harm and supportive of the rights of their parents and caregivers who needed direction from the social service system. Mandy was known to almost all of us who cared for vulnerable children and knew that she would exert every effort to see that the best possible outcomes could be achieved on their behalf. She was honest, fair and conscientious in all she did and was exemplary in her support of those working to bring healing to abused children. Because of her well known advocacy for that population in need, she led the way to much improved services for at risk children and support to those caring for them. Much of what we now see in our region that enhances care for all children can be attributed to the groundwork Mandy initiated.

I regret that Mandy's present situation may cloud the knowledge of what true efforts she has exhibited to make this area a better place for children.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on her be-half.

Sincerely,


Olson Huff, MD FAAP

May 28, 2019

Honorable Judge Robert Conrad
Or Presiding Judge

Re: United States of America vs. Amanda Louise Stone

Your Honor:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Amanda Louise Stone, whom I know as Mandy Stone. I have lived in Black Mountain, North Carolina, for more than 65 years, and I have known Mandy all of her life. She grew up in her family home across the street from me, where she still resides. Because I am elderly and live alone now, I know the importance of a good neighbor, and Mandy is a very good neighbor.

I have always known her to be kind, caring, and perceptive. She is more than willing to help a friend in every way possible. She frequently helps me, especially when I am away, by collecting my mail and newspaper and taking out the garbage. In addition, she has always voluntarily done these things without being asked.

She also welcomes the neighborhood young people who gather there on a regular basis to play with her nephew. Almost every day, I see a group of bicycles outside her home where kids have come to visit.

I believe Mandy to be a good family person and a good citizen.

Respectfully,



Mary F. Stephens
206 View Street
Black Mountain, NC 28711

Richard B. Stone (1925-1998)
William H. Christy
Bryant D. Webster
James M. Ellis
Barrett W. McFatter

bill@stoneandchristy.com
Direct 828.357.4575



August 19, 2019

Judge Robert J. Conrad
United States District Court Judge
Western District of North Carolina

Re: Amanda L. Stone

Dear Judge Conrad:

I was fortunate enough to be introduced to Richard B. ("Dick") Stone in 1994. He was a solo practice attorney for most of his career in Black Mountain, and he explained to me that his youngest of seven children had turned thirty, and that none of them were attorneys and he assumed he would have no family successor. As he was near 70 he was looking for someone to join him and to ultimately assume the law practice. In 1995 I moved to Black Mountain and in 1996 Dick and I formed Stone & Christy. Dick had served nine consecutive terms as Mayor of Black Mountain, and for many years served as volunteer attorney for the Town. Dick also was a member of "the greatest generation" having joined the infantry as a 17 year old private and was honorably discharged as a Captain after serving in the European theatre. In addition to being one of the most humorous people I have met, Dick was widely respected for his acumen and ability to resolve problems. Though Dick died in 1998, we are still proud to carry his name in our firm name.

Amanda L. ("Mandy") Stone was one of the seven children of Dick and Muriel Stone. I got to know all of Dick and Muriel's children when I moved to Black Mountain and attended many gatherings at the Stone house where I was welcomed by all of them; they are a close knit and welcoming family. I consider all six of the remaining living children to be friends, and the entire family holds a special place in my heart.

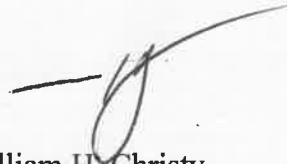
The only knowledge that I have of the current situation is through what I have read in the newspaper. Like others, I am saddened by the behavior of public officials as set forth in the proceedings as reported. However, I am honored to vouch for Mandy's character that I have observed over the years: a loyal and loving member of a well-respected family, and someone that I will always consider a friend.

828.669.7642 www.stoneandchristy.com fax: 828.669.5678
110 N. Dougherty Street, Black Mountain, North Carolina 28711

If there are any questions about the above I am happy to answer those. Thanking you for your consideration of the above, I am

Sincerely,

STONE & CHRISTY, P.A.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'W. Christy', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

William H. Christy

WHC;cam